

James Monroe to Andrew Jackson, February 5, 1815, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

SECRETARY MONROE TO JACKSON.

Department of War, February 5, 1815.

Sir, I have just had the honor to receive your letters of the 9th and 13th Ultimo communicating an account of the brilliant victory, obtained by the troops under your command near New Orleans, over the very superior force of the veteran troops of Great Britain which attacked you on the 8th. It is particularly gratifying to find, that in so signal a success, attended with the slaughter and captivity of so many of the invading foe, it has pleased Providence to extend a protecting arm over our fellow citizens. History records no example, of so glorious a victory, obtained, with so little bloodshed, on the part of the victorious.

I am instructed by the President to convey to you in strong terms, his approbation of your conduct, and of that of the troops acting under you who have rendered such important services to their country. Your arrangements for the defence of the City, in selecting and fortifying the proper points at which to oppose the enemy, and in the disposition of your force in action; afford proofs of a talent for command, which do you honor. By the example of your personal energy and distinguished gallantry, in the field, the more necessary and commendable with young troops, it is believed that the happiest effect was produced. By these important services you have merited in an eminent degree the approbation of the Government and the gratitude of your fellow citizens.

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The President requests that you will express to the troops who have acted under you the very favourable sentiments which he entertains of their conduct. The alacrity with which they repaired to the standard of their country, exposed in many instances to distressing privations; the patience with which they have borne the fatigues of the campaign and their bravery in action, have been seen by him with great satisfaction. To our newly adopted fellow citizens of Louisiana, you will give assurance, of his great sensibility, to the decided and honourable proofs which they have given of their attachment and devotion to the union, and of their manly support of the rights of their country. Little did the enemy expect in their invasion of New Orleans to meet the forces of such distant states assembled in its defence, or such firm faithful and zealous cooperation on the part of our newly adopted brethren there.

Every effort which the Government could make to reinforce you by troops, and supply you with arms, and every munition of war has been made, and is still making. I send you a statement of these supplies, and of the times at which they were forwarded. You will investigate the conduct of those to whose charge they were committed, and if guilty of criminal neglect, inflict on them the punishment which their conduct merits and the laws will justify.

It will be gratifying to you to know that 5000 additional troops are ordered to your aid from Kentucky, and 2500 from Tennessee and that the most effectual measures have been taken for their transportation provision and accomodation. Orders have also been given for the supply of those troops with arms, and for a further supply to you of munitions of war.

Major General Gaines¹ was ordered some time since to repair to New Orleans, to take a command under you with an understanding that he should proceed slowly on account of the weakness of his health proceeding from his wounds which were still open. I hope however that he will soon be with you, if he has not yet arrived.

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1 Gaines arrived in New Orleans Feb. 4, 1815. See his letter to Jackson of that date, Jackson MSS.

I have the honor to be